

**ANG****Bayan**

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Pinapatnubayan ng Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo

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*Editorial*

# Hold the Arroyo regime responsible for its criminal neglect of the victims of calamity

**T**he Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) condoles with the millions of victims of the massive floods and landslides that came in the wake of typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng. In the face of the Arroyo government's inutility, the CPP calls on the broad masses of the people to help each other and act to rise above these disasters and hardships.

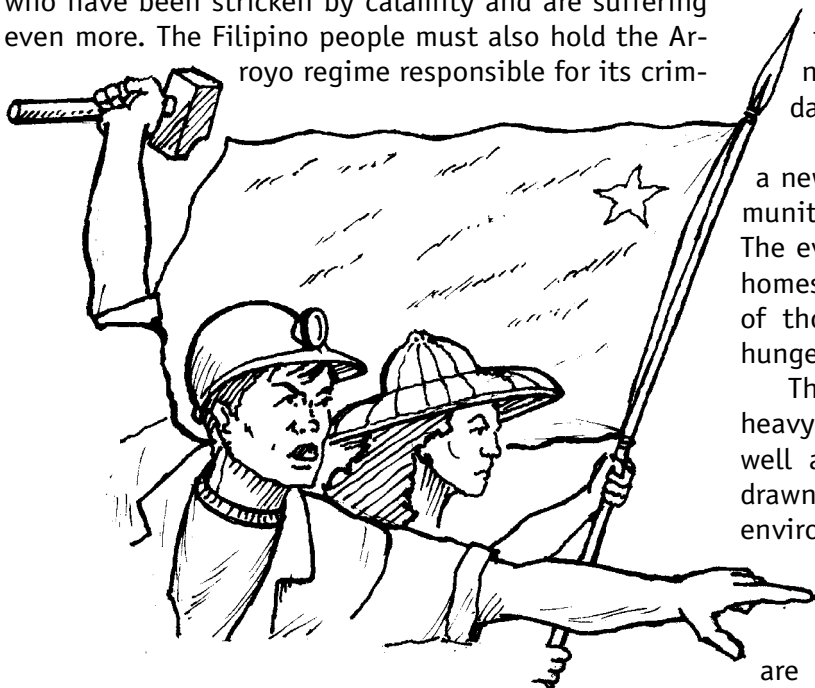
The CPP also calls on all revolutionaries and propeople forces to do all they can to help the people who have been stricken by calamity and are suffering even more. The Filipino people must also hold the Arroyo regime responsible for its crim-

inal neglect of the calamity victims and its culpability for the devastation suffered by the people.

The most recent disasters have starkly brought to the fore the utter inutility of government agencies to undertake swift and appropriate rescue efforts. At the height of the floods in Metro Manila, thousands were forced to climb rooftops and wait for days for help that never came. Many died and were orphaned. The people are fuming with rage at the inutile government, especially those who survived through their own efforts and the millions who were witness to the widespread suffering these past few days.

The Arroyo regime even exploited the threat of a new typhoon to forcibly evacuate urban poor communities ostensibly to keep them out of harm's way. The evacuees are now banned from returning to their homes despite the lack of decent relocation sites. Tens of thousands are now in evacuation centers where hunger and disease are rampant.

The wide swath of destruction wrought by the heavy rains in Metro Manila and nearby provinces as well as in vast farmlands and fishing grounds has drawn attention to the unbridled destruction of the environment, deforestation and the denudation of mountains wrought by commercial logging. It also underscores the grave pollution of waterways and the rampant illegal structures that are blocking lakes, rivers and bays. And it has



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brought to the fore anew the rotten infrastructure, including the weak flood-control systems and ill-maintained floodways in the national capital and nearby towns and cities.

The disaster has likewise exposed the dismal state of housing in the city and the utter lack of government support services in vast areas where most of the working class and the urban poor live—in densely packed communities along estuaries and clogged streams and in lowlying areas that are flood-prone and vulnerable to calamities. It is the residents of these areas who are the most gravely affected when disaster strikes. It is their homes and properties that were submerged and swept away by raging floodwaters that were unprecedented in scale.

The damage wrought by the heavy downpour and the widespread deluge was proof of the callousness, unbridled corruption and criminal neglect of national and local bureaucrats and of the lopsided priorities of government projects that have resulted in the lack of urban development, poor social services and the overall neglect of

the people's welfare.

The hundreds who were killed, those who lost loved ones or were separated from them, and many others who suffered loss of property due to the floods and landslides are victims not only of natural calamities, but of the Arroyo regime's longstanding corruption and neglect.

In the face of the rotten government's utter neglect and inability to promptly provide enough resources to assist the victims, millions of Filipinos have been voluntarily giving various forms of assistance to ease the victims' suffering.

A number of government agencies have had the gall to claim certain initiatives by private groups as their own. After squandering resources on Arroyo's travels and luxuries, and exhausting Malacañang's calamity fund in the process, the government had nothing to spend when typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng vented their fury.

In unity with the efforts of other sectors, the CPP, NDFP, revolutionary mass organizations and other progressive forces have mobilized to provide assistance to the

victims. The CPP has instructed local NPA units and other revolutionary forces to give priority to relief and rescue efforts and assist the people in resuming production and livelihoods and recovering their bearings.

In the face of all this, the millions of victims confront the serious problem of poverty, the loss of their homes and other belongings as well as their farms, fishing grounds and other sources of livelihood. To make matters worse, these disasters struck in the midst of the grave financial crisis besetting the country and the entire world.

Instead of alleviating the people's poverty, the reactionary government has been worsening their suffering and oppression. The people must help each other to overcome the recent disaster and their worsening poverty.

There is even more urgent need to advance various means of organizing and various forms of people's movements and struggles for jobs, livelihood and social justice nationwide. Revolutionaries, progressives, patriotic and democratic organizations and forces must take the lead in this endeavor and contribute to it to the best of their ability.

In the face of these severe calamities and amid the people's terrible suffering and the utter hopelessness of relying on the ruling government and system, the revolutionary forces must persevere in and redouble their efforts to raise the restive people's level of political consciousness and organize and mobilize them. They must lead and guide the people in treading the path of struggle and overthrowing the rotten, puppet government and system, and building a truly compassionate, propeople, just, free and progressive government and social system. **AB**



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# Relief efforts for victims of typhoon Ondoy

**T**yphoon Ondoy which vented its wrath on September 26 submerged the greater part of Metro Manila and neighboring provinces, claiming almost 324 lives (123 in Metro Manila), leaving 38 missing and more than P10 billion worth of properties and livelihood destroyed. Up to two million people lost their homes, belongings and livelihood.

The Citizen's Disaster Response Center, which provided prompt assistance to the victims reported that government calamity funds had long been drained. Of the P1 billion Calamity Fund for the year 2009, only P27 million was left.

**Serve the People Brigade.** Meanwhile, various progressive organizations and parties have been launching relief operations for the typhoon victims. Bayan Muna reported that it had already distributed relief goods to Metro Manila residents. Gabriela Women's Party, Anakpawis party, Kilusang Mayo Uno and the

Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap likewise participated in the relief drive.

The Kabataan Party launched a feeding program and cleanup drive in Marikina, Manila and Quezon City. Students from the University of the Philippines in Los Baños, Laguna took the initiative of reviving the "Serve the People Brigade" and were able to collect P25,000 in their initial efforts. They continue to raise and distribute relief goods to affected communities.

Migrante also campaigned for relief goods for calamity victims in various countries.

Relief goods started flooding in to Migrante offices in Hongkong, New Zealand, Middle East countries and countries where migrant Filipinos work.

Due to the difficulty of sending material assistance to the Philippines, the International Office of the NDFP in Utrecht, The Netherlands has requested donors to instead give cash donations to the "Ondoy Victims Fund."

Meanwhile, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), the National Democratic Front and revolutionary organizations have expressed sympathy with, and called for assistance to the millions of victims of tropical storm Ondoy that devastated Metro Manila and 25 provinces.

The CPP also called on all revolutionary mass organizations and revolutionary forces to exert all effort to help the victims of the disaster. It has ordered all New People's Army units in affected areas to help the calamity victims. Tactical offensives in the affected areas are to be held off for the next few days as local NPA units concentrate on relief and rehabilitation and in helping the people resume production and rebuild their livelihoods.

AB



## Road user's tax—biggest "pork barrel"

**S**everal controversies have emerged on how officials of the Arroyo regime have blatantly plundered huge amounts of funds from the Road User's Tax (RUT) or Motor Vehicle User's Charge (MVUC).

The RUT or MVUC is a tax collected from motor vehicle owners when they register their vehicles at the

Land Transportation Office (LTO). The fund, which amounts to P8 billion yearly, is managed by the Road User's Tax Board (RB) that is directly under the Office of the President. Since 2001, it has collected up to P56.5 billion, making it the fourth biggest special fund directly managed by the Office of the President.

The RUT or MVUC is different from other huge gov-

ernment funds in that it is not part of the national budget and its use is therefore not subject to Congressional planning and reviews. It is not assessed, regulated or audited even by the Department of Budget and the Commission on Audit (COA). It is dubbed the biggest "pork barrel" because its disposition is solely based on the whims and caprices of the officials managing the fund. The RB has continuously rejected requests by the COA to submit financial reports. Congress has attempted several times to subject the fund to budgetary regulation and review, but each time, such attempts, along with other local government units' efforts to scrutinize it, have been met with resistance by Gloria Arroyo herself.

Rodolfo "Dodie" Puno, who served as RB General Secretary, and his brother Department of Interior and Local Government Sec. Ronaldo Puno who assigned him and other officials to the RB have long been in a conspiracy to steal from the RUT fund. Conniving with them in this nefarious scheme are Public Works Sec. Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. who concurrently chairs the RB and no less than Gloria Arroyo who appointed them and other RB officials.

Several congressional resolutions and court cases have already been filed to look into these anomalies. In March alone, at least 15 solons filed a congressional resolution to conduct an investigation on missing RB funds that were allegedly used in various provincial projects. Rep. Carlos Padilla of Nueva Vizcaya said that in 2004, the RB allocated P1 billion for road repair in Cagayan Valley, with P400 million purportedly destined for Nueva Vizcaya. But the province never received the money and neither were there any road repair projects in the area.

Eastern Samar allegedly received a P350 million allocation for road signs and guard rails but no such amount reached the province and not a single RB-funded project was launched.

The RB also reportedly funded over P1 billion worth of projects in Nueva Ecija through a company called Meditech Trade and Development Corporation. The company's projects, however, are nowhere to be found in the province.

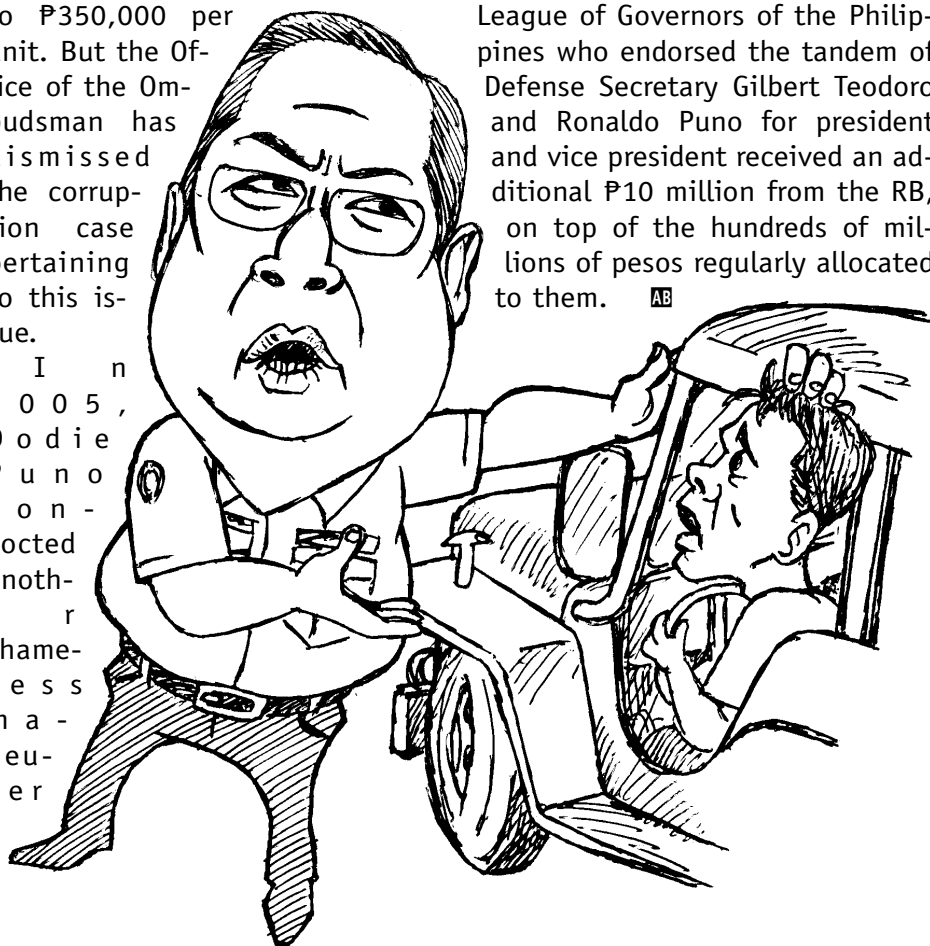
The Puno brothers and Secretary Ebdane were also directly involved in embezzling P365.8 million in RB funds through controversial projects such as the purchase of 1,800 lampposts in preparation for the ASEAN summit that was held in Cebu in 2006. The lampposts were later found to be grossly overpriced. From an actual unit cost of only P6,737.39 per lamppost, the cost was jacked up from P84,000 all the way to P350,000 per unit. But the Office of the Ombudsman has dismissed the corruption case pertaining to this issue.

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to facilitate the immediate release of some P2 billion in RB funds by requiring 70 employees of the RB General Secretariat to sign a document indicating that they each allegedly received a P29.2 million bonus.

But the biggest chunk of the RB's fund goes to Arroyo's electoral campaign. The fund was almost depleted in the 2004 elections after the RB bankrolled "Project Oyster," a Malacañang scheme to purportedly provide jobs (such as work in road repair projects) to out-of-school youth. Similarly, during the 2007 electoral campaign, the RB released P24.7 billion—three times bigger than its annual collection and its regular annual disbursements—on various pretexts.

The entire RB fund is again being geared for the Arroyo clique's electoral campaign, especially with Puno running for vice president. In September, each member of the League of Governors of the Philippines who endorsed the tandem of Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro and Ronaldo Puno for president and vice president received an additional P10 million from the RB, on top of the hundreds of millions of pesos regularly allocated to them. **AB**





## Four military troops killed in Agusan del Sur

**F**our soldiers belonging to the Philippine Army 36th IB Alpha Company were killed on the spot in an ambush by Red fighters of the Conrado Heredia Command of the New People's Army (NPA). They were aboard a truck in Barangay San Ignacio, Trento, Agusan del Sur on October 3 when the ambush took place. The Red fighters seized an M16 armalite rifle.

The following morning, a policeman was wounded in an ambush by Red guerrillas on a convoy of the 1406th Provincial Mobile Force in Tagbina, Surigao del Sur.

Meanwhile, a soldier was killed and several others were wounded in an encounter between the NPA and patrolling troops of the 26th IB along the thickly forested boundary between Barangay Kinampay, Las Nieves in Agusan del Norte and Barangay Esperanza in Agusan del Sur on September 30.

The NPA also raided a branch of the Dole-Philippines multinational company in Barangay San Carlos, Valencia City in Bukidnon on September 23. The Red fighters confiscated a Thompson submachine gun and a shotgun from the company's armed guards. **AB**

## NPA offensives in Samar

**T**wenty three soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) were killed and six others were wounded in various tactical offensives carried out by Red fighters of the New People's Army in Northern and Eastern Samar from June to mid-August.

**August 16.** Troops belonging to the 63rd IB operating in Barangay Cuenco, Las Navas, Northern Samar immediately returned to their headquarters after an NPA squad under the Rogelio Bantilo Command confiscated their food supply. As a result, the government soldiers had to stop their military operations in the area.

**August 5.** Eleven soldiers of the 63rd IB were killed in a clash with an NPA unit under the Silvio Pajares Command (SPC) in Palapag town. The Red guerrillas were able to launch the first volley and quickly took ambush positions against the military troopers.

**June 15-17.** Eight government

soldiers were confirmed dead in three sniping operations launched by the Rodante Urtal Command against the 20th IB in Barangay E. Duran, Bobon on June 17. The military troops were conducting a pursuit operation after the Red fighters harassed the 52nd IB camp in Barangay San Pascual, Catarman on June 15.

Meanwhile, the NPA Sergio Lobina Command confirmed in a report that four were killed on the side of the AFP after an encounter in Barangay Caglao-an, Dolores, Eastern Samar on June 4. The Red fighters were able to seize the initiative from the enemy although the latter fired the first shot. **AB**

## NDF-Bicol pays tribute to slain Red fighters

**N**DF-Bicol spokesperson Ka Gregorio Bañares paid tribute to eight Red fighters who were martyred in a clash with the 8th Scout Rangers Company in Barangay Mabanate, Pilar, Sorsogon on September 25.

The martyred comrades were identified as Jonathan "Ka Ely" Balasta of Irosin; Ka Tangkad, Ka Rema and Ka Rannie of Castilla; Ka Jun of Matnog; Ka Teddy and Ka Rudy of Bulan; and Ka Diego of Casiguran, Sorsogon. Bañares extended the revolutionary forces' deepest condolences to the families of the valiant comrades who made the ultimate sacrifice for the revolution.

Almost 1,200 people joined the funeral march for Ka Ely on October 1 in Irosin, Sorsogon despite heavy rains.

In an interview with the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Mrs. Alicia Balasta, mother of the martyred NPA medic said, "I have no regrets even though my son died at a young age because I know that he lived his life to the fullest in the path he chose. The overwhelming number of people who attended my son's funeral was testament to that."

Bañares, on the other hand, condemned the killing and wounding of three civilians during the attack by military elements. A civilian was killed and two others, one of them a pregnant woman, were wounded in the incident.

Bañares also paid tribute to Ka Papay who was killed in another encounter in Manito, Albay on September 25. **AB**



# Military operations suffer defeat in Samar

**F**ourteen elements of the 34th IB and Scout Rangers were killed and at least five others were wounded in military offensives launched by the New People's Army (NPA) in Samar from February to June.

**San Jorge.** Five military elements were killed in a sniping operation staged by a team from the NPA Arnulfo Ortiz Command (AOC-NPA) on May 28. On June 2, two AFP soldiers were wounded in two harassment operations by the AOC-BHB against another enemy column in Barangay Bayang.

**Paranas.** A government trooper was killed in a clash with a squad of

the NPA Serafin Pacimos Command (SPC-NPA) in Barangay Nawi on March 16. Two soldiers were killed and one was wounded in a sniping operation by the SPC-NPA in Barangay Anagasi on March 21. Another soldier was killed after being sniped by the SPC-NPA in Barangay

Nawi on March 29.

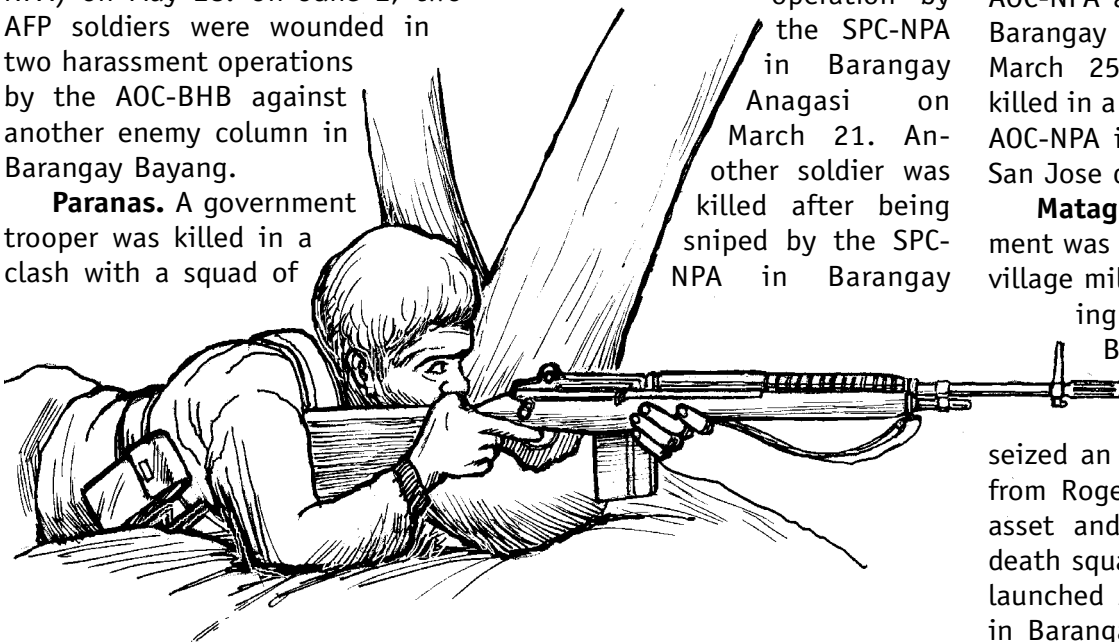
The SPC-NPA launched an operation to confiscate the RSOT's food in Barangay Anagasi on March 31 and Barangay Tapul on April 17.

**San Jose de Buan.** A government soldier was killed in an encounter between a unit of the AOC-NPA and military elements in Barangay Calundan, San Jorge on March 25. Another soldier was killed in a sniping operation by the AOC-NPA in Barangay Can-aponte, San Jose de Buan.

**Mataguinao.** A military element was killed in an ambush by a village militia unit against operating troops of the 20th IB in Barangay Carolina on March 16.

**Jiabong.** The NPA seized an Ingram submachine gun from Rogel Gabin, an intelligence asset and member of a military death squad in a special operation launched by a team from the AOC in Barangay Cantungtong on February 16.

AB



# Military in Eastern Samar refuses to sign human rights agreement

**O**fficers of the 14th IB have refused to sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) stating that they will respect the rights of the people in areas covered by their military operations. The MOA contained nothing more than a reiteration of provisions of existing laws pertaining to human rights recognized by the 1987 constitution and international protocols.

The MOA signing was supposed to take place after a multisectoral dialogue on October 5 in Gen. MacArthur, Eastern Samar. The dialogue was at-

tended by 600 farmers, representatives of the Commission on Human Rights, church people, local government officials of Gen. MacArthur and officers of the 14th IB. The event was organized by Alyansa han Nagkakaurusa nga Parag-uma, Negosyante ngan Barangay Konseho (AKAP NA KAMO).

The regional human rights watchdog Katungod-SB said that the 14th IB's refusal to sign the MOA only shows its lack of sincerity in respecting human rights.

AB

# Agrarian revolution among the Manobo

*The reactionary government has never treated us as human beings. We were severely discriminated against and we were powerless. It was only when the revolutionary movement touched our lives that we were finally treated as human beings. – Ka Sot, a Lumad leader.*

It was during the 1950s when foreign logging companies encroached on the forested ancestral lands of the Manobo in Mindanao. They grabbed these lands and plundered thousands of hectares of forest after the reactionary state declared them to be uninhabited. As a result, entire Lumad communities were driven deeper into the forest. This further alienated the Lumad from the mainstream economy.

Several other companies took part in the plunder, including mining companies. Utilizing the state's military forces and reactionary laws, the Lumad were completely driven away from their lands and former livelihood.

The history of the Manobo in the area took a different turn when Red fighters of the New People's Army arrived in 1981. The revolutionaries wasted no time in investigating the conditions of the Lumad communities and taking up issues they encountered. They held meetings with the *datus* and drew up plans to reclaim their ancestral lands. Along with the *datus*, they formed revolutionary mass organizations that served as the venue for their actions.

The displaced Lumad who finally found their voice launched the first ever successful anti-logging campaign. They asserted their pres-

ence in the area and reclaimed their lands along the highway. They succeeded in recovering their farm lots, and eventually attained the freedom to till the land as they wished.

Grave abuses in the area were addressed, and foreign companies were booted out through the firm coordination between the council of leaders in the communities and the Red guerrillas.

The revolutionary movement thus began planting the seeds of agrarian revolution in these areas.

Policies on logging and mining were drawn up. A meeting of tribal leaders in 1993 gave birth to the historic Malanday agreement where policies such as the partial log ban in environmentally critical areas were instituted.

## Systematizing agricultural production

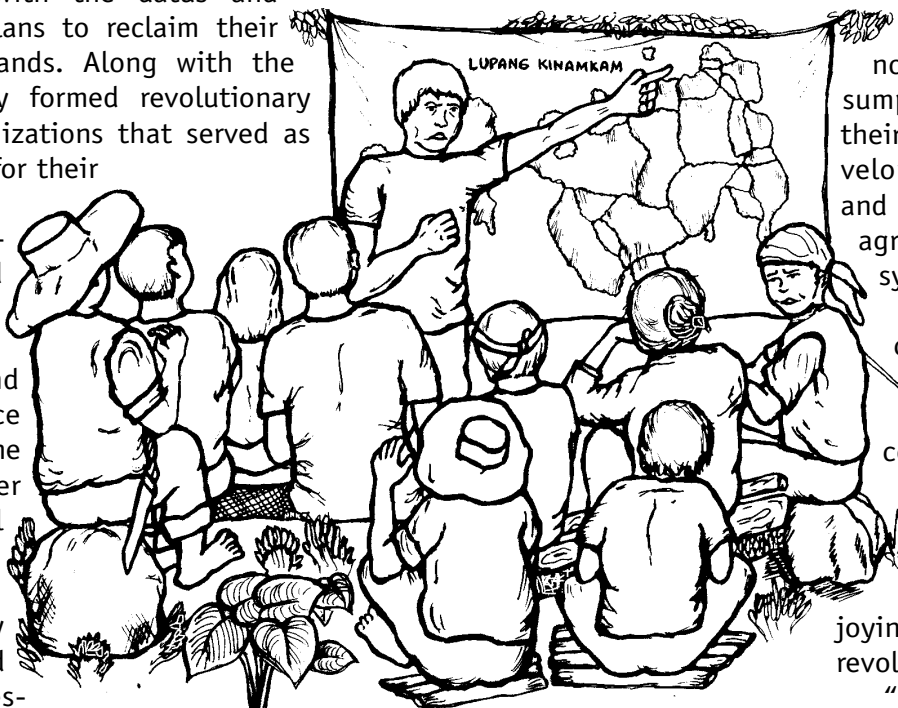
The Lumad used to depend on swidden farming, fishing, hunting and gathering for their livelihood and were largely dependent on the forest's natural resources. In the early 1980s, the Red fighters began teaching them modern and productive farming methods. They started implementing the "Ekonomyang Sarang sa Kaugalingon" or self-sufficient economy in 1987.

Implementing the program was not smooth and easy during its initial stages, but this did not deter the Red fighters from diligently carrying out the plan. The Red people's army took a direct hand in managing the farms and participated in actual planting. The guerrillas even distributed coconut seeds, banana suckers and abaca rootstocks.

As a result of this program, Lumad communities now plant for their own consumption, dramatically changing their nomadic way of life. They developed permanent settlements and more stable livelihoods when agricultural production became systematic.

They planted two types of crops—durable or cash crops such as abaca and rattan, and perishable crops for consumption such as vegetables. Aside from farming, poultrys and piggeries also became sources of livelihood. The masses began enjoying the fruits of the agrarian revolution.

"Hungos" or mutual exchange



of labor became widespread. Rattan was produced in a systematic and sustainable manner by allowing cutting in identified areas only during certain periods. This ensured that there would be rattan trees left in the community for future use. Communal farms were established and managed both by the organized masses and their Red army. Individual farms also exist, where “hungos” is likewise implemented. Mortgaging land was forbidden to prevent the emergence of new landlords. In extreme cases, the communal farms take over the management of these lands until such time that the bankrupt farmer has paid off his debts.

By the mid-1990s, the economic conditions of the Manobo people gradually improved. The seeds of agrarian revolution that the Red fighters planted had led to the growth of a sturdy mass movement. It was the organized masses themselves who propagated the program to adjoining barrios. If the Lumad

had once been heavily dependent on the forest’s natural bounty, now they were developing the land through their own labor.

### Revolutionary harvest

The Lumad were able to build on their rich history of struggle and wage continued resistance. They gained all-sided victories. They were able to protect the environment and thwart the large-scale environmental destruction brought about by destructive logging and mining operations. Mass organizations developed and alliance work on environmental protection and assertion of ancestral land rights extended to the national level. The power of the council of leaders grew significantly.

The Manobo wielded revolutionary power and were able to boot out a number of big companies in the 1980s. They were able to prevent further plunder by the comprador bourgeoisie and reclaim their rights over thousands of

hectares of ancestral lands. These lands were turned over to communal and individual owners.

The livelihood of the Lumad people greatly improved. The only time they feel economic difficulties is during military operations by the reactionary state. Even settlers in the communities benefited from the abundant gains of agrarian revolution. A number of poor peasants who came from neighboring provinces and islands have also been allowed to till parcels of the restored lands.

The wealth of experience of the Lumad proves that agrarian revolution is fundamental in galvanizing the unity of the masses. Despite relentless state fascism, the people continuously defended their right to their ancestral lands. The key lies in the gains attained by the people from agrarian revolution and earned through their long history of militant struggle. These victories now serve to inspire other provinces and regions in Mindanao.

## Building a PKM chapter in Panay

*The following is based on an article published in Daba-Daba, the revolutionary mass paper in Panay. It chronicles the people’s experience in building a chapter of the Pambansang Katipunan ng mga Magbubukid (PKM) in a guerrilla front in Panay.*

**T**he people’s revolutionary struggle in Barangay Buhay has long been in existence. But the people’s organizations suffered a temporary setback from 1988 to 1996 due to the erroneous political line and intense attacks by enemy forces. The peasant organizations regained strength in 1998 under the aegis of the Party’s Second Great Rectification Movement.

Waging agrarian revolution, they persevered in resisting widespread landgrabbing by big landlords and the Philippine Army’s 3rd Infantry Division (3ID). They are now culti-





vating almost 1,000 hectares of land without having to pay land rent. In the past, the farmers were forced to pay land rent to the Philippine Army during harvest season because their farmlands were purportedly part of the Philippine Army reservation.

They were able to resist and frustrate all attempts by the enemy to weaken and crush peasants' organizations and the entire revolutionary movement through Oplan Bantay Laya 1 and 2.

The local Party branch was formed, providing guidance to the mass organizations and village militia. It eventually gained more strength. Party branch cadres and members were steeled in struggle and endured sacrifices that went with the implementation of Party tasks amid unrelenting enemy attacks and other hardships.

The masses never wavered in taking part both in the open and underground struggle. In fact, close to 63% of the total households had already been mobilized in mass struggles. The barangay councils and the revolutionary movement closely coordinate during open legal struggles and in solving the problems of the villagers.

The revolutionary forces also began the cooperative movement that in turn helped in providing relief to the people amid the onslaught of the economic crisis and exploitation by landlords and rich peasants.

The local Party branches produced a good number of mass activists who have the capacity to lead barangay-wide protest actions. Some have joined the New People's Army as fulltime Red fighters and become Party members and cadres.

**Actual assembly.** The people's assembly started at 9:00 a.m. The delegates agreed on the assem-



bly's objective of raising the level of their revolutionary organization from a peasant organizing committee to a PKM chapter. They reviewed their achievements and drew lessons from the challenges they encountered in the past.

Before the 80 peasant delegates voted, the assembly first conducted an extensive discussion on the proper qualifications for being elected into the PKM's collective leadership. After that, they elected the members of the PKM council through secret balloting.

The delegates were satisfied with their choice of council leaders for the PKM chapter and with the voting process because it was only on this occasion that they truly experienced genuine democracy. The event also was a testament to the level of consolidation of the mass organizations.

The Red fighters, on the other hand, helped in counting the votes.

After the newly elected council members were sworn into office, they were given the chance to

speak before the assembly.

**Program of action.** The chairperson presented the assessment to the general assembly for ratification. The leader then presented the PKM's one-year program of action, which the body approved. The program's primary objective is to expand and consolidate their organization, strengthen their cooperatives and launch other social projects for the people. The council also laid out plans for a campaign to increase production and provide trainings for this purpose. The assembly pledged to continue defending the victories they have gained from agrarian revolution, especially on confiscated lands. They will continue to contribute to efforts to defeat OBL2 and other devious schemes of enemy forces.

In particular, they will continue to defend all attempts by landlords to regain control over their farmlands and frustrate all counterrevolutionary maneuvers of the military's Reengineered Special Operations Team (RSOT) including the building of detachments and the recruitment of CAFGU elements and enemy informers.

The PKM will help recruit Red fighters, aside from providing other forms of support to the armed struggle. They will also train local medics and strengthen health campaigns, focusing primarily on preventive health care.

The general assembly concluded at around 5 p.m. After setting the next PKM council meeting and settling other matters, the peasant delegates went home strongly united and fully determined to advance the revolutionary peasant movement. They may have treaded different paths on their way home but they all had one direction—the absolute victory of the revolutionary peasant movement and the entire national democratic movement. AB

# CPP warns against the escalation of US military intervention

**T**he Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) warned the US not to use the death of two American soldiers in Sulu on September 29 to justify the escalation of its military intervention in the country. The CPP also demanded the pullout of all American troops from the country, a stop to the operations of the 600-strong Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines and the junking of the one-sided Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA).

Two soldiers under the US Special Forces and an element of the Philippine Marines were killed in Barangay Kagay, Indanan, Sula while two others were wounded when the Humvee they were riding was hit by a roadside bomb. The US casualties were S/Sgt. Jack Martin and Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Shaw, both elements of the 3rd Battalion 1st Special Forces Group. Meanwhile, the Philippine Marine killed was identified as PFC Jerwin Estrada.

According to a statement from the US Department of Defense, the two American soldiers were in the Philippines to support "Operation Enduring Freedom", the moniker for the terrorist war being launched by the US in Iraq, Afghanistan and its so-called second front in Mindanao. This was the first time that American soldiers were killed in a combat zone in Mindanao. Their deaths prove that US soldiers are involved in combat.

Prior to this, 37 AFP and PNP elements were killed in successive encounters between the Abu Sayyaf and the military in Indanan from September 19 to September 21.

The CPP said that this is not the first and last time that the entry of US soldiers in combat



zones and their actual involvement in combat operations in the Philippines will be exposed.

The CPP called on the Filipino and American people to demand that the Obama government withdraw all US troops from the country in order to avoid the escalation of combat operations involving US sol-

diers and prevent the Philippines from turning into another Iraq and Afghanistan. The CPP said that the American people also do not wish to be involved in another Vietnam war.

The CPP also criticized the US government's use of the calamities that have struck the Philippines as a pretext to conduct so-called humanitarian missions and deploy of additional interventionist military troops in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Hundreds of American soldiers from the US Pacific Command in Okinawa have been sent to the country since last week. On October 5, two US warships anchored at the Manila South Harbor were loaded with an unspecified number of soldiers and equipment. Also last week, another group from the US 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force arrived from Japan.

AB

## Balance Piston Exercises in Samar kept from the public

THE 8th ID of the Armed Forces of the Philippines purposely kept from the public the entry of American troops involved in the "Balance Piston 2009" joint military exercises in Samar. The military training was conducted at Camp Gen. Eugenio Daza, the 801st Infantry Brigade's main camp in Barangay Fatima, Hinabangan, Samar and finished on August 28 with almost no media publicity.

The AFP concealed the training from the public because it wanted to avoid being confronted by a series of large-scale protest actions like the ones launched against the previous "Balance Piston 2009" exercises at the 3rd ID headquarters in Camp Gen. Macario Peralta, Jr. in Jamindan, Capiz in Panay from January-February and in the provinces of Albay, Sorsogon and Masbate in Bicol Region in April.

AB

# Ka Joema taken off EU terrorist blacklist

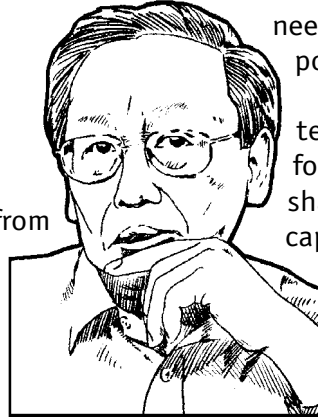
**P**rof. Jose Ma. (Ka Joema) Sison's name was removed from the terrorist list of the European Union (EU) after the Luxembourg-based European Court of First Instance (EFCI) annulled all decisions of the Council of the EU on September 30.

The EFCI said that the Council of the EU had unjustly maintained Ka Joema in the so-called terrorist blacklist without any concrete evidence that he was involved in any specific act of terrorism.

Ka Joema has been unjustly persecuted since 2002 when his name was included on the list of so-called terrorists. He was prohibited from having a legal residence, earning an income, receiving a living allowance, having sufficient insurance coverage, receiving old-age pension and traveling freely.

According to National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP)

negotiating panel chair Luis Jalandoni, the unjust blacklisting of Ka Joema and two major allied organizations of the NDFP, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the New People's Army (NPA) seriously jeopardized the peace negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the NDFP. Following the terrorist listing of the three by the US, Council of the EU and other governments, the GRP insisted that the NDFP sign the one-sided Final Peace Accord (FPA) to divert the people's attention from the real roots of the armed conflict and the



need for socio-economic and political reforms.

The FPA disregarded ten peace agreements forged by both sides and shamelessly demanded the capitulation of the NDFP.

It laid aside the substantive demands of the people for social, economic and political reforms.

Now that Ka Joema, chief political consultant of the NDFP has been taken off the EU "terrorist" list, this can serve as a favorable condition for the peace talks. Jalandoni called on all peace advocates in the Philippines and abroad to push further for peace negotiations that address the roots of the armed conflict.

On the other hand, although the cases against Ka Joema have been dismissed, Malacañang still insists that the cases against him in the Philippines remain and that he will still be arrested if he returns to the country. **AB**

## RPA kills Negros peasant leader

REYNALDO BUCALING, 41, chair of the Pakig-dait sa Kalambu-an sa Kambayugo (PSK) and member of the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) was killed after suffering multiple gunshot wounds. The victim was shot while he was cooking in his kitchen in Purok Dalia, Barangay Bug-ang, Tobosa, Negros Occidental on October 5.

According to Bucaling's wife Nida, the perpetrators were elements of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army (RPA) bandit group. Bucaling is the counter-revolutionary armed group's fourth victim since July this year. **AB**

## Pregnant woman killed in bombings by American troops and AFP

A 19-YEAR OLD pregnant woman was killed after AFP and US joint forces indiscriminately fired artillery rounds and conducted aerial bombing on September 20 in Sitio Talibang, Barangay Buansa, Indanan, Sulu.

According to a report from the Kawagib Alliance for the Advancement of Moro Human Rights and the Indanan Social Welfare Office, the victim, Wilma Ambil died on the spot.

The bombing also damaged many other houses. **AB**



## Military surveils award-winning writer

THE MILITARY has been surveilling progressive and award-winning writer Jun Cruz Reyes, who is also a professor at the University of the Philippines and a painter. Along with National Artist for Literature Bienvenido Lumbera, Reyes is one of the cultural activists protesting Malacañang's intrusion into the selection of National Artists.

Reyes said that eight men aboard a white van staked out his home in Sta. Elena, Hagonoy, Bulacan on the night of September 10. On September 13, a man approached him inside the UP campus and took his picture. Later that night, a black van parked near his house.

He also said that in 2006, he received a text message that said he was in the military's order of battle in the Central Luzon region which was formerly under the command of Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan. In August 2007, several men attempted to break into his home and were only prevented from doing so when his neighbors were alerted by his dogs' barking.

In November 2007, uniformed military men approached his neighbor. They were looking for Reyes and tried to pay his neighbor ₱20,000 in exchange for information on his whereabouts. It was also at this time that Reyes stopped his regular workshop sessions with young writers in Hagonoy because the military was harassing them. **AB**

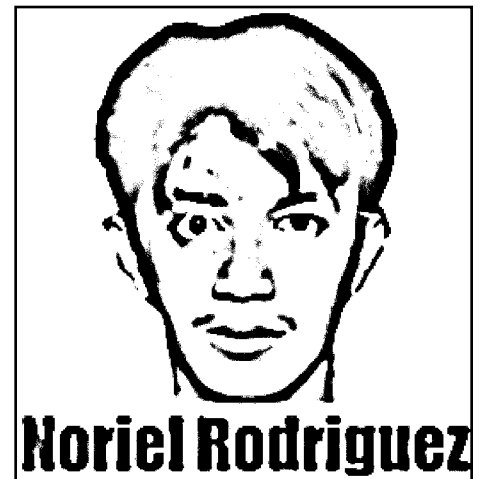
## Abducted activist found in an AFP camp

**A**nakbayan member Noriel Rodriguez, 26, was found by relatives on September 17 at a military camp in Cagayan. Rodriguez was found ten days after he was abducted. He was imprisoned in several camps of the 17th IB in Barangay Maasin, Alcala, Cagayan. His body bore signs of torture perpetuated by the military.

Rodriguez was abducted on September 6 by armed men in Gonzaga, Cagayan. His family went to the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) on September 17 where they learned from one of its investigators that Rodriguez was detained at the 17th IB camp. When his family and four CHR representatives went to the camp, Lt. Col. Lawrence Mina, chief of the 17th IB said that Rodriguez is a member of the New People's Army (NPA).

Rodriguez testified through a sworn affidavit that the military wanted him to place his thumbmark on a document stating that he is an NPA surrenderee, that he was involved in an encounter with the military in Cumao, Gattaran, Cagayan and that the soldiers did not shoot him because he was allegedly their asset. The military hung him when he refused to place his thumbmark on the document. A rope was tied around his neck and pulled upward while another soldier held and pulled his body downward.

A soldier also blew air into his left ear for 30 minutes using a straw while his mouth and right ear were covered. The soldiers also beat him while inside a vehicle. One soldier cocked and pointed a .45 caliber pistol at the back of his head. They



threatened to kill him and even his family. Rodriguez was kicked and beaten for a whole day. They were forcing him to show them where an NPA camp was located. Rodriguez was eventually forced to sign the document because of the brutal torture inflicted on him.

After the soldiers released him, Rodriguez and his family travelled to Manila accompanied by the CHR and a group of soldiers under the command of a Colonel Matutina. The military gave Rodriguez a cellphone and sim card so that he could be contacted to do what the military claimed was his work as an asset. The military kept close tabs on Rodriguez until he reached his home where the soldiers remained and went around for 30 minutes. Pictures

were taken of the house and the framed photographs of his cousins.

The Tanggulan Youth Network for Human Rights and Civil Liberties criticized the CHR for issuing a statement from its office in Cagayan Valley saying that the case was closed after Rodriguez was released. Tanggulan assailed the CHR because it knew that the military was holding Rodriguez way before his relatives came to its office, yet it did nothing.

Meanwhile, in Iloilo, soldiers of the Philippine

Army 82nd IB arrested Jose Gabion and his wife Rosemarie, both farmers and residents of Barangay Tigba-naba, Igbaras. The military claimed before the media that it was the Gabions who pointed out an NPA camp in Sitio Tigbasa, Barangay Tibanaba. However, the barriofolk attested that the couple's house is very far from the camp and that they had no knowledge of its existence. Because the military failed in their objective, they forced the Gabions to instead admit that they are members of the NPA. **AB**

## Lumad in Talaingod are victims of military abuses

**A**n investigation conducted in Talaingod, Davao del Norte on September 15 has revealed the military's extensive abuse of the human rights of the Ata-Manobo Lumad. The investigation was carried out by the Lumad and human rights and peace workers in response to reports of human rights violations reaching the offices of the PASAKA Confederation of Lumad Organizations and the Solidarity Action Group for Indigenous Peoples.

Militarization by the 10th ID 60th IB began in August with the aim of destroying the Salugpongan Ta Tanu Igkanugon. For a decade, this group has stood and fought against the giant corporations' plunder of their ancestral lands. Up to 40,000 hectares of land in Talaingod are earmarked for conversion into coffee plantations of Nestlé Philippines, Inc. A Memorandum of Agreement has already been signed by the reactionary government and the company.

The investigation revealed that as many as 22 elements of the 60th IB are camping out in Sitio Dulyan, Barangay Sto. Niño while troops comprising the Community Assistance Development (CAD), formerly the Re-engineered Special Operations Team (RSOT), are in Sitios Bagang, Banwalay, Bugni, Laboo, Laslasakan, Nasilaban and

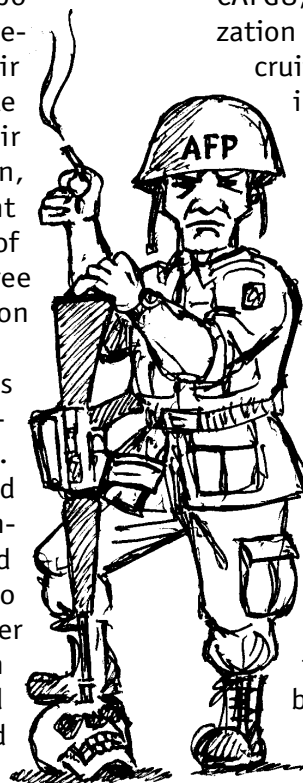
Sambolongan in Barangay Palma Gil. The Ata-Manobo are suffering the destruction of their property, forcible searches of their homes, coercion, threats, harassment and the violation of their rights to free movement, association and speech.

The military has likewise been camping out in schools. This has traumatized the youth in the community. Soldiers led by Lt. Dennis Ayungo and Sgt. Christopher Oliveros go from house to house and telling the Lumad not to let their chil-

dren attend the Salupongan Ta Tanu Igkanugon Community Learning Center while accusing its teachers of being fakes and communists. The soldiers frequently threaten, harass and investigate the teachers.

The military has also been destroying the crops and fences around them. The soldiers are also forcing the Lumad to build their outhouses and huts for them. The barriofolk are also being forced to join the Barangay Defense System, CAFGU, Civilian Volunteer Organization or the Bagani Force. The recruits are prevented from working their farms, thus resulting in widespread hunger in the area.

The soldiers also tried to interfere with the investigation by preventing the Lumad from freely relaying their stories. Members of the investigating team were detained for three hours. Even their drivers were also accosted. The team was only allowed to go home when the soldiers found out that the incident was being aired over the radio and several members of the media had become aware of what was happening to them. **AB**





# Arroyo regime violates workers' rights—ILO

**T**he Arroyo regime clearly violated the basic rights of Filipino workers. An investigation carried out by the United Nations International Labor Organization (ILO) in Manila on September 22-29 came to this conclusion after looking into cases of repression, coercion and killings of union leaders and members under the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU).

In particular, the Arroyo regime violated ILO Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and ILO Convention 90 on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining. The ILO also said that the Arroyo regime must prove that the government is not involved in any of the killings of worker leaders. The ILO also demanded the enactment of laws to further protect workers against violence. Victims, their families and representatives of organizations under KMU attended the hearings conducted by three ILO representatives.

Up to 92 worker leaders have been slain by Gloria Arroyo's regime since she came to power in 2001. Nine union leaders are also currently imprisoned and several unions are being terrorized by the state.

The KMU said that these are clear cases of repression of the labor movement and should be investigated.

The following were among the cases investigated by the ILO:

1. The slaying of Diosdado "Ka Fort" Fortuna, leader of the Nestlé Workers Union in Laguna. He was killed by armed men on September 22, 2005 in front of the picketline.
2. The killing on June 6, 2008

of Armando Dolorosa, vice chair of the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) in Negros Occidental, by paramilitary forces hired by Hacienda Myrianne.

3. The deaths of two workers at a prison in Cainta, Rizal after they became ill and were denied their basic needs. They are among the "Karnation 20" who were imprisoned and charged with trumped-up cases by their management.

4. The abduction of Rogelio Concepcion, union leader at Solid Enterprises in San Ildefonso, Bulacan in March 2006. He remains missing.

5. The shooting of Vicente Barrios, union president of the Nagkahiusang Mamumuo sa Suyafa Farm (NAMASUFA) in Compostela Valley, and his companion Jerson

Lastimoso in December 2006. Lastimoso was killed while Barrios survived.

6. The wounding of Nicanor Briones, NFSW president in Camarines Sur after they were shot at by two men riding a motorcycle.

7. The wounding of Joel Ascucia, chair of CONDOR-PISTON in Bicol, after being shot while preparing for a transport strike on July 13, 2009.

**Other complaints investigated.** The Pagkakaisa ng Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan (Pamantik) also complained of the dispersals of their strikes and maltreatment of their workers, among them the violent dispersal at the picketline of Sun-Ever Light Electronics Company in Cavite in 2004, where a woman was seriously injured after they were attacked by elements of the Special Warfare Action Group (SWAG), guards and police. The no union-no strike policy is enforced in the export processing zones, thus the severe brutality against the workers. Also in Antipolo, Rizal, the 16th IB has set up a detachment at the Gokongwei-owned Robina Farms in order to terrorize workers and launch a counter-union campaign. The soldiers are accusing several workers of being members of the New People's Army.

The hog farm recently hired new workers who are former soldiers and intelligence agents in order to silence the existing union.

Up to 250 members of the Nestlé union in Laguna have been slapped with trumped-up charges as a result of their eight-year strike.

In Southern Mindanao, soldiers are actively involved in the counter-worker campaign. Some of



them are spying on the office of the Dolefil Union in the midst of their struggle for a Collective Bargaining Agreement. The soldiers launched a counter-union campaign by tearing up streamers put up by the workers and painting slogans on the walls that defame union leaders. Soldiers of the 28th IB called a meeting at the factory of the Fresh Banana Plantations in order to urge workers not to join the Unyon ng Nagkahiusang Mamumuo in San Jose which is a KMU affiliate.

In Cebu, pictures of 30 members of Anita's Home Bakeshop Workers Union (AHBWU) who are accused of

being terrorists were posted at the factory. The anti-communist Alliance of Nationalism and Democracy (ANAD) is also active against AHBWU and it is taking the lead in distributing fliers to workers filled with lies.

These are only a few of the cases presented by KMU to the ILO. The KMU hopes that the ILO will have a good recommendation for the international community and that the Arroyo government will be singled out and assailed for its responsibility in this scheme of suppression. **AB**

## Union leader arrested in Rizal

**D**eclard Cangmaong, 36, a union leader at a garments factory in Calamba, Laguna, was arrested on September 21 in Barangay San Isidro, Angono, Rizal in a joint military and police operation. Cangmaong is accused of being a member of the New People's Army (NPA) in Mindanao with a P1.2 million reward for his capture.

The Pagkakaisa ng Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan-Kilusang Mayo Uno (Pamantik-KMU)

decried Cangmaong's arrest, saying that he is a union leader and not an NPA member.

Meanwhile, in early September 2009, agents of the 66th IB and the Workers for Industrial Peace and Economic Reform (WIPER) went to various packing plants in Maragusan, Compostela Valley to force workers under the Maragusan United Workers Union to secede from the National Fed-

eration of Labor Union which is an affiliate of KMU. They presented a video, lectured the workers and spread black propaganda against KMU chair Romualdo Basilio. The agents distributed leaflets branding Basilio a "legal front of the CPP/NPA".

WIPER, a military creation, aims to bust militant unions and form new unions under the TUCP which is controlled by the reactionary government. **AB**

## 3,000 workers and residents launch labor protest

**M**ore than 3,000 workers at North Harbor and residents from communities near the port marched on September 21 towards Mendiola to demand job security in the face of the port's impending privatization. The march



was led by the Alliance of Port/Transport Workers and Porters in North Harbor (APTWP-NH).

They were supported by various organizations of seafarers, vendors and residents at the port. On September 1,

some 3,000 workers also marched to Mendiola in protest.

The workers are demanding that the Terms of Reference of the privatization agreement be changed, because they guarantee the workers only two years of employment at the port after the the contract is awarded.

No less than 7,000 workers, vendors, drivers, tri-cycle operators and other groups at the North Harbor port are threatened with job losses because of this. More than 100,000 families living near the port terminal are threatened with demolition.

"Until we are assured of our job security, we will not stop in mobilizing by the thousands to Malacañang," said Jake Azores, president of the APTWP-NH and the United Dockhandlers, Inc., a local union. Meanwhile, the port workers and North Harbor residents barricaded its gate and launched a strike on October 1 that paralyzed port operations for half a day.

## Gov't employees protest planned relocation

**M**embers of the Social Welfare Employees Association of the Philippines (Sweap) protested on September 18 the planned relocation of two public charitable institutions. The government intends to move the Golden Acres Home for the Aged (GA) from its current location in Bago Bantay, Quezon City to Tanay, Rizal. Sweap is also fighting plans to close down the Reception and Study Center for Children (RSCC).

The present location of the GA and RSCC lies within the Quezon City Central Business District Project (QC-CBD) which the government plans to sell to private developers for profit. As a result, more than 227 senior citizens living at the GA and the infants and children being cared for by the RSCC orphanage will be displaced.

Sweap, a union of DSWD employees affiliated with the Confederation for the Unity, Recog-

nition and Advancement of Government Employees or COURAGE is opposing the government's out and out abandonment of its obligation to maintain affordable facilities for neglected senior citizens in the National Capital Region.

The senior citizens also do not want to be relocated because of Tanay's distance from their family members. Aside from this, they are worried about the new facility's close proximity to

Camp Mateo Capinpin, where military trainings are regularly held. They fear being hit by stray bullets and distressed by the noise made by the cannons. They will also be far from the hospitals and other health services found only in Metro Manila.

The GA employees also pointed out that not all of its clients will be transferred to the new facility in Tanay. They also warned that the planned relocation and closure of the two institutions will result in mass layoffs and resignations of employees due to their distance from Metro Manila.

Sweap will launch a series of protest actions against the planned relocation and closure. "Our struggle against privatization and commercialization is a struggle to protect the social services that the Filipino people deserve," said Sweap national president Ramon Loza. **AB**

## BAYAN and ILPS hold protest action vs G20

**T**he Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) and the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS)-Philippines marched towards the US Embassy to protest the Group of 20 (G20) Summit which was held on September 24-25 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA. The G20 is comprised of 19 of the world's largest economies plus the European Union.

BAYAN criticized the G20 because it lacks the mandate or authority to steer the direction of the global economy during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Because of its exclusion of hundreds of countries and billions of people, a narrow agenda has been set by the

G20 on how to resolve the crisis.

Also according to BAYAN, instead of coming up with genuine reforms and lasting solutions, the G20 summit is only being used by the US and the other richest and most powerful countries to legitimize flawed neoliberal policies and discredited multilateral insti-

tutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the guise of addressing the global financial and economic crisis.

These neoliberal policies such as privatization, liberalization and deregulation were imposed on many poor countries by the IMF.

BAYAN further said that poor countries like the Philippines must not allow a handful of rich and powerful countries to dictate the global crisis agenda.

They must reject G20's calls for additional and sustained opening of the economy to unbridled trade and investment as well as increased contributions to the IMF.

Meanwhile, in Pittsburgh, more than 10,000 people rallied to protest the G20 Summit. **AB**